

focus of the event was an open microphone session in which tribal leaders had the opportunity to describe to the Secretary issues of concern to their tribes. Manuel told investigators that, immediately prior to the meeting, she briefed the Secretary, and included a description of the issues relating to the Hudson casino application. Babbitt does not specifically recall being briefed on the Hudson matter before this meeting, but says he may have been. A briefing memo also was provided to Babbitt. The memo, issued under Skibine's name, recounted, among other things, the location of the proposed off-reservation land acquisition, the Area Office's favorable recommendation, and the fact that it was pending before IGMS. The memo also described the Feb. 8, 1995, Capitol Hill meeting Duffy attended in which strong opposition to the application was expressed:

[T]he Minnesota Congressional delegation, as well as all Minnesota gaming tribes, and the St. Croix Tribe of Wisconsin expressed their opposition to this acquisition on the grounds that it will adversely affect Minnesota gaming tribes, and force these tribes into attempting to expand their gaming operations off-reservation, a move that may be opposed by State and local officials. They also requested that they be granted additional time in which to submit documentation supporting their opposition to the proposed acquisition on the grounds that it is detrimental to the surrounding community and neighboring tribes. The Department agreed to this request for additional time.¹⁷²

Babbitt denied any specific recollection of reading the memo but said it was customary to provide him with such materials about issues pending in places where he was traveling on official business. He said he probably read or skimmed it on the plane en route to Wisconsin.

According to a transcript of the tribal dialogue, the Hudson proposal was only one of a number of issues discussed by tribal leaders. Some witnesses have indicated, however, that the transcript fails to reflect an angry exchange during the meeting between Lewis Taylor and Arlyn

¹⁷²Briefing Paper from George Skibine to Secretary of the Interior, April 5, 1995.